

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 REYKJA 00846 191850Z

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15 COA-02 INT-08

LAB-06 SIL-01 IO-13 TRSE-00 OMB-01 NEA-10 MBFR-03

SAJ-01 RSR-01 /140 W

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R 191650Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3808

INFO USMISSION NATO

CINCLANT

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM 466

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT IC NATO

SUBJECT: NEW MINISTER COMMENTS ON BASE AND FISHERIES NEGOTIATIONS

1. FOLLOWING FORMAL ENTRY INTO CABINET JULY 16 BY BJORN JONSSON, FORMER CHAIRMAN OF ICELANDIC FEDERATION OF LABOR, AS NEW MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS, AND ONE OF TWO OLL CABINET MEMBERS, AMB INVITED HIM TO LUNCH FOR OSTENSIBLE PURPOSE OF INTRODUCING EMBASSY OFFICERS TO HIM. PURPOSE WAS ALSO TO TRY TO DRAW HIM OUT ON WHAT HE SEES AS HIS ROLE IN CABINET, HIS ATTITUDES TOWARD COMING BASE NEGOTIATIONS AND CURRENT FISHERIES DISPUTE, AND ANY VIEWS HE MIGHT HAVE ON STABILITY OF GOVERNMENT.

2. BECAUSE HE IS BASICALLY RETICENT MAN AND LONG-TIME LABOR UNION  
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PAGE 02 REYKJA 00846 191850Z

NEGOTIATOR WHO HAS PROBABLY NEVER SPENT MUCH EFFORT ON FOREIGN

AFFAIRS, JONSSON'S REMARKS WERE WELL-GUARDED. HE SEEMED TO SEE HIMSELF PRIMARILY AS LABOR'S REPRESENTATIVE IN CABINET AND HIS ROLE AS THAT OF WATCHING OUT FOR LABOR'S INTERESTS. HIS FOCUS OF ATTENTION IN COMING MONTHS SEEMED TO BE PRIMARILY ON RENEGOTIATION OF LABOR UNION CONTRACTS DUE TO EXPIRE LATE THIS YEAR. IN THIS CONNECTION, HOWEVER, HE SAID ALTHING MUST SETTLE LABOR ISSUES BEFORE IT CAN GET TO CONSIDERATION OF DEFENSE AND BASE ISSUES. WHEN GUDMUNDER GARDARSSON, LABOR OFFICIAL WHO WAS ACCOMPANYING JONSSON, MADE ERRONEOUS STATEMENT THAT IF NO NEW AGREEMENT ON BASE HAD BEEN NEGOTIATED BY DECEMBER 25, PRESENT AGREEMENT WOULD END, JONSSON CORRECTED HIM AND POINTED OUT THAT PRESENT AGREEMENT PROVIDES THAT IT CAN BE DENOUNCED ANY TIME AFTER DECEMBER 25 BUT DOES NOT MAKE IT OBLIGATORY. HE SAID HE DOUBTED ALTHING WOULD BE ABLE CONSIDER MATTER UNTIL "ONE OR TWO MONTHS" AFTER THAT DATE.

3. JONSSON REITERATED WHAT HAS BECOME USUAL ICELANDIC THEME THAT

DEFENSE DISCUSSIONS ARE SERIOUSLY PREJUDICED BY PRESENCE OF BRITISH NAVY ON ICELANDIC FISHING GROUNDS. ON OUR PART, WE USED OCCASION TO FILL HIM IN ON STRATEGIC VALUE OF BASE AND WHY IT IS IMPORTANT NOT TO ALLOW BASE AND FISHING ISSUES TO BECOME CONNECTED. HE AGREED THEY WERE SEPARATE ISSUES BUT SAID WE MUST UNDERSTAND HOW THEY HAD BECOME INTERCONNECTED IN PUBLIC MIND.

4. IN TALKING OF BASE, AMB SAID ONE OF PROBLEMS IN CONSIDERING REDUCTIONS OF UNIFORMED PERSONNEL WAS THAT THEY WERE TRAINED SPECIALISTS AND WE WONDERED IF SUFFICIENT NUMBERS OF SUCH PEOPLE COULD BE FOUND IN ICELAND AS REPLACEMENTS. JONSSON SAID ICELAND WAS, IN FACT, EXPORTER OF SKILLED WORKERS BECAUSE SUCH PEOPLE OFTEN HAD TROUBLE FINDING APPROPRIATE JOBS HERE AND HE THOUGHT THERE SHOULD BE NO PROBLEM IF REPLACEMENT PLANNING WAS OVER A PERIOD OF SEVERAL YEARS.

5. ON FISHERIES DISPUTE, QUESTION WAS RAISED WHETHER FISHERIES MINISTER JOSEFSSON WANTED ANY KIND OF AGREEMENT AT ALL WITH BRITISH OR WEST GERMANS OR WHETHER HE WISHED TO USE DISPUTE AS METHOD OF SEVERING ICELANDIC TIES WITH WEST. JONSSON CITED RECENT SPEECHES BY JOSEFSSON AS EVIDENCE THAT HE HAS MOVED TO POSITION OF ACTUALLY WANTING AGREEMENT AND GAVE CURIOUS OPINION THAT SOVIET UNION NOW ALSO WANTS TO SEE GOI-UK-FRG AGREEMENTS. HE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 REYKJA 00846 191850Z

CLAIMED TO HAVE HEARD SOVIETS WANTED TO SEE THIS PRECEDENT BECAUSE OF SOME DISPUTE WITH JAPANESE IN PACIFIC.

6. IN INTERESTING SIDELIGHT, GARDARSSON SAID HE WOULD NOT TRUST JOSEFSSON AND WOULD NOT ALLOW HIM IN HIS HOME. JONSSON SAID HE WOULD NOT TRUST HIM EITHER BUT THOUGHT HE WAS BEING STRAIGHTFORWARD IN THIS MATTER. HE COULD NOT AGREE THAT JOSEFSSON DID NOT WANT AN AGREEMENT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.

7. JONSSON SAID SOVIETS HAD BEEN MAKING POINT LATELY OF SAYING TO ICELANDERS THAT WHILE THEY HAD NOT BEEN ABLE PUBLICLY TO SUPPORT GOI UNILATERAL EXTENSION OF FISHERIES ZONE, THEY HOPED IT WAS BEING NOTICED THAT THEY WERE NOT ENTERING THAT ZONE. WE POINTED OUT THIS WAS NO GREAT CONCESSION SINCE THEY NEVER HAD FISHED IN AREA.

8. JONSSON STATED BASIC FEAR OF ICELANDERS IN WHOLE FISHERIES MATTER WAS THAT FACTORY SHIPS WOULD EVENTUALLY SHOW UP OFF THEIR COAST AND DEplete ALL FISHING. HE SAID IT WAS FEARED THAT EVEN AGREEMENTS FOR REDUCED CATCHES WITH UK AND FRG WOULD CAUSE PRESSURE FOR QUOTAS FROM OTHER COUNTRIES WHICH ARE NOT NOW FISHING IN AREA AND COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE PREVIOUSLY RECOGNIZED ICELAND'S 50-MILE LIMIT AND HAD WITHDRAWN FROM AREA AND RESULT MIGHT WELL BE CONSIDERABLE INCREASE IN FISHING IN AREA RATHER THAN DECREASE. WHEN IT WAS ARGUED THAT SUCH QUOTAS COULD EASILY BE SET ON BASIS OF CATCH BY SUCH APPLICANTS IN PREVIOUS YEARS, HE SEEMED UNWILLING TO AGREE.

9. COMMENT: HAVING BEEN IN OFFICE ONLY TWO DAYS, JONSSON OBVIOUSLY DID NOT WISH TO GO FAR IN COMMITTING HIMSELF. JONSSON'S POSITION WILL BE IMPORTANT TO US SINCE HIS WILL BE SWING VOTE IN CABINET ON DEFENSE MATTERS. HE HAS BEEN DESCRIBED BY INFORMANTS AS HAVING AN OPEN MIND ON THE BASE ISSUE, LEANING TOWARD BELIEVING SOME SORT OF DEFENSE ARRANGEMENT IS STILL NECESSARY BUT NOT CONVINCED THE IDF REQUIRES ALL THE MILITARY MANPOWER PRESENTLY HERE. IRVING

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** n/a  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 19 JUL 1973  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** smithrj  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1973REYKJA00846  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** n/a  
**From:** REYKJAVIK  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1973/newtext/t19730723/aaaaaqnz.tel  
**Line Count:** 144  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** smithrj  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 12 SEP 2001  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <12-Sep-2001 by martinml>; APPROVED <27-Nov-2001 by smithrj>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** NEW MINISTER COMMENTS ON BASE AND FISHERIES NEGOTIATIONS  
**TAGS:** PINT, IC, NATO  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005